

Statement on BRAC

2:15 p.m.

August 24, 2005

I am, of course, disappointed but not surprised by the BRAC Commission's decision to close Naval Station Pascagoula. A strong case was made for the base's viability in the cause of national defense, but we knew from the start of the BRAC process that some Navy ships stationed at Pascagoula were previously scheduled for decommissioning and there would not likely be any replacements.

I am proud of the substantive arguments made by local leaders as well as the entire Mississippi Military Communities Council as we worked together in an effort to protect the base. Assuming the commission recommendations survive through presidential and congressional review, it is my desire to work with Mayor Matthew Avara and his local team on strategies for future use of the facility. I have already directed the Mississippi Development Authority to support the local community in every possible way as attention turns to the subject of re-use.